

Key Ideas from the Keys to Quality Accreditation Project



Key Idea: Self Study: Organizing the Collection of Information

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For centers and schools involved in the accreditation process, a key emphasis is conducting the first part of the self-study - referred to as Phase I in the accreditation time line. This task naturally takes the longest to accomplish. Often, this is the area where teachers and administrators can become bogged down. Here are some tips for organizing this section of the self-study.

1. First read/review each of the criteria found in the ECCO forms together (teachers and administrator/observer). Be sure staff have time to become familiar with the observation form and how to complete it properly. (Refer to *Guide to Accreditation*, page 21). You may need to spend considerable time discussing as a staff the criteria, its rationale, and how they relate to your program. Be sure to read the expectations for each criterion in *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures* (Green).
2. To provide for an organized and deliberate method of evaluation, the administrator/observer needs to develop his/her own time line regarding when observations will take place and which part of the schedule will be observed. This plan will be more elaborate depending on how many classrooms and teachers the administrator will be observing. A minimum of three 20-minute sessions should be planned in order for the administrator/observer to get a total picture of each classroom and participants know what to expect.
3. Determine the date when the ECCO needs to be completed by both teachers and the administrator.
4. Set a date for the administrator to meet with each teacher to discuss ratings and come to a consensus.
5. When all of the ECCO forms for each classroom have been completed, the entire staff should meet together to determine a course of action for making needed improvements.
6. This process can be completed as many times as the program would like. Once the staff have made the improvements they wish to make, and the administrator/observer agree on a rating for each criterion, they then note it on the Classroom Observation Summary Sheet.

7. Your center/classroom rating is completed by using the Classroom Observation Summary Sheet to determine the average rating for each criterion. The results of observations are averaged across classrooms and it is the average score that is reported for criteria in the white program book. You may view a sample of this form on page 49 in *The Guide to Accreditation*.

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